

REACTION REPORT

Kissinger Latin America Trip - I

No. 13

February 17, 1976

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Le Monde Frankfurter Allgemeine 新聞 BRCEL TIEMPO

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STANDARD

Aftenposten

AUSTRALIA

EUROPE 1

Straits Times

TADO DE S. PA



The Economist




Summary

The beginning of Secretary Kissinger's tour of Latin America received heavy coverage by Hemisphere media and was widely reported elsewhere.

Stress in most comment was on the problems of U.S. - Latin America relations awaiting Dr. Kissinger in the countries he would visit, particularly trade and oil questions, post-Angola relations with Cuba, and the Panama Canal issue.

Observers by and large saw little prospect of immediate concrete improvement on specific questions. Stuttgarter Zeitung was among those judging that "the U.S. Government has neglected its relations with Latin America for too long... If there is anything Latin American countries agree on these days it is the rejection of U.S. influence."

Le Quotidien de Paris remarked that "trips to Latin America have never brought good luck to the emissaries of U.S. foreign policy... (and) the climate of 1976 is even less favorable... than that of the 1960s."

On the other hand, London's Financial Times argued that "if the Secretary... finishes his tour with a greater feeling for the hopes and expectations of the region, and if he has been able to give the impression that Washington is more sympathetic than it once was to the need for social and economic change in Latin America, then something will have been achieved."

Available comment from Latin American papers included some expressions of a similar, limited optimism. While the prestigious Estado de Sao Paulo observed that "Kissinger's crusade loses much of its credibility due to the prospect that he may not be kept in the State Department even if Ford is elected," the Brazilian news weekly Veja suggested that "despite increasing differences... both countries could inaugurate a period of rapprochement with or even without the signing of a political agreement in Brasilia this week."

FIGARO LA LIBRE BELGI CORRIERE DELLA SERA DAGENS



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WESTERN EUROPE

BRITAIN

"Something Can Be Achieved"

British papers today saw Secretary Kissinger facing a succession of difficult meetings with Latin American leaders during his current tour because of real or imagined neglect by the U.S. of its Hemisphere neighbors.

The independent London Financial Times carried an editorial predicting that "between now and the end of the month in the various Latin American capitals Dr. Kissinger will be bombarded with a series of requests, demands, complaints, suggestions, lectures and admonitions on a great range of topics from the future of the Panama Canal, through the concept of a declaration of a moratorium for the debts of the third world to the inequities of the U.S. trade act.

"His discussions with his hosts will rarely touch on the great strategic questions of the moment, perhaps only in the context of Cuba's new energetic foreign policy. At few of his stops will his reception be warm.

"Despite this, if the Secretary of State finishes his tour with a greater feeling for the hopes and expectations of the region, and if he has been able to give the impression that Washington is more sympathetic than it once was to the need for social and economic change in Latin America, then something will have been achieved."

The paper's Washington correspondent, David Bell, remarked that "there has been considerable skepticism...in some parts of South America" about U.S. interest in Hemisphere developments, adding:

"The new dialogue that Dr. Kissinger first proposed in 1973 has never materialized and now seems quietly forgotten."

"Fence-mending and Some Wider Issues of Concern"

Washington correspondent Fred Emery observed in today's independent Times of London that "Latin American affairs always tend to come last in Washington and this journey is one of reassurance and fence-mending." He said U.S. diplomats "tend to see the Panama Canal as one of the issues causing confusion and strain in relations....However, there are obviously wider issues of concern.

"Chile and Argentina pose large questions about stability; Venezuela...is an important contributor to 'third world' thinking on energy supplies. There is also Cuba. Thanks to the Angola intervention, the U.S. is no longer seeking 'normalization' with Havana."

"No Crusade Against Cuba at This Point"

The conservative Daily Telegraph carried a Washington-dated report that "it is no secret the U.S. Government looks on Cuba in an entirely new light as a serious menace to other small countries now that Cubans have been doing almost all the recent fighting in Angola on behalf of the MPLA.

"But Dr. Kissinger feels it would do no good to try to enlist the Latins in any kind of crusade against Dr. Castro at this point. They will just be told what American intelligence knows and invited to draw their own conclusions."

"Attempt to Prevent a Third World Bloc"

The liberal Guardian's Washington man, Jonathan Steele, reported yesterday that the trip "is being described here as a low-key fact-finding mission meant to diffuse the growing tendency of third world countries to act as a block against the developed world."

He added that Dr. Kissinger "is concerned by what he calls 'North-South' diplomacy and the temptation of some countries which produce raw materials to emulate OPEC and try to form cartels against the industrial world."

FRANCE

"Into a Less Favorable Climate"

French papers today reported the start of Secretary Kissinger's tour on inside pages, emphasizing what they generally considered a cool reception in Caracas.

Intellectual-left Quotidien de Paris remarked that "trips to Latin America have never brought good luck to the emissaries of U. S. foreign policy....

"The climate of 1976 is even less favorable to the Washington representative than that of the 1960s. Never has U.S. prestige been so low: Vietnam, Watergate, the economic crisis--on every level the Colossus of the North has suffered blows that seem to paralyze it. Cuba sends soldiers to Angola with impunity and Washington is incapable of lifting a finger to stop it.

"Moreover, Mr. Kissinger is but a shadow of the triumphant 'Super K' of past years....(and) it is a diminished man who goes to face the Latin American complaints."

WEST GERMANY

"Relations Neglected Too Long"

Media in West Germany said the Kissinger trip was meant to counteract the effect of long-time neglect and "to resume the dialogue."

Several papers Saturday and yesterday reported the Secretary's press conference statement that he would resign if he concluded that it would best serve U. S. foreign policy interests. Pro-Christian Democratic Frankfurter Neue Presse carried Washington correspondent Guenther de Thier's observation that Mr. Kissinger's room for maneuver might soon provide for nothing but his resignation.

Independent Stuttgarter Zeitung said today that "one certainly cannot say Kissinger will be received with open arms.... Latin American countries from relatively leftist Peru to relatively rightist Brazil reject Washington's big-power policy. The U. S. Government had neglected its relations with Latin America for too long. The great dialogue Kissinger intended to initiate on the basis of equality has not materialized..."

"U. S. Should Support Reforms"

A correspondent in Rio de Janeiro for independent left-of-center Sueddeutsche Zeitung of Munich wrote today that "neglect of Latin America has given rise to nationalistic movements everywhere. If there is anything Latin American countries agree on these days it is the rejection of U.S. influence.... Even Senator Humphrey has criticized the Department of State for giving too much attention to ideological questions in Latin America and too little to the people's struggle for survival.

"Instead of supporting the interests of multinational corporations, the U. S. should support efforts at land reform and at fairer distribution of income..."

TV: "No Decisive Change or Improvement"

West German television correspondents last night expressed doubt that the trip would make much change in U. S. - Latin American relations.

Washington correspondent Carl Weiss said the trip "will not bring any decisive changes or improvement in the climate... although American aid to the earthquake victims has just shown Washington's best side...

"Because of Cuban involvement in Angola, nothing will change for the better in the relationship between Washington and Havana, and the Panama question will not be solved--because of Congress' resistance to sacrificing permanent American sovereignty in the Canal Zone.

"Thus, except for a few economic details, nothing will be achieved during the Kissinger trip, but this may be better than a new mammoth program with a beautiful title which would soon be forgotten again."

"Dependence on U. S. Will Continue"

A correspondent in Mexico City said last night in a filmed report that "for his hosts, Kissinger's trip will be primarily a security problem.

"Military honors and pomp will not conceal the fact that the South American nations' understanding of a dialogue with Washington does not coincide with Kissinger's threat only to help those countries which do not vote against Washington's interests in international organizations. They have not forgotten Kissinger's indication that the U.S., as the most important economic power in this area, has primarily its markets and raw material sources in mind.

"It will mean little for the general relationship with the Latin American states whether Kissinger's trip ends in harmony or discord--most of the states of Latin America will continue to depend economically, militarily and politically on the U.S. anyway."

ITALY

"Rumors of Widespread Skepticism"

Media coverage of Secretary Kissinger's Latin American trip today consisted mainly of newsplay.

Independent Il Messaggero, Christian Democratic Il Popolo, middle-of-the-road Il Giornale and Communist L'Unita all carried an ANSA news agency story that stated: "His trip does not seem to have raised excessive enthusiasm... On the contrary, it is rumored that widespread skepticism and a wait-and-see attitude are apparent in many Latin American circles..."

AUSTRIA

"Can Only Win Token Success"

Independent Die Presse of Vienna, in an article headed "A Hot Trip For Henry Kissinger," stated Saturday that "no laurels await him. Latin America's relations with the U.S. are neither good nor bad--they have been virtually nonexistent since Kissinger entered his State Department office. This has been an utter humiliation for the neighbors to the south..."

"Mr. Kissinger can at best win a token success during this Latin American trip. He long neglected to take notice of the subcontinent's growing self-assertion in foreign affairs--self-assertion as a result of oil dollars cleverly used by Caracas."

EAST ASIA

JAPAN

"Panama Canal the Top Issue"

Mr. Kissinger's Latin American tour received moderate coverage in the Japanese press today.

Independent liberal Asahi contended that "the return of the Panama Canal is expected to be the top problem of the Kissinger trip to Latin America" since "there seems to be a feeling that the Panama Canal problem is the symbol of U.S. 'control' of Latin America.... There are fears that anti-American feelings in various areas will rise unless this problem is solved amicably."

Asserting that "the recent trend in Congress appears to be that it is still too early to return the Canal," the paper termed "adjustment of such problems as the Panama Canal" as "the greatest task of the Secretary's trip."

"Purpose to Stop Moves Away From U.S."

Independent moderate Yomiuri's Buenos Aires correspondent said that "the purpose of the Secretary's trip to Latin America is to stop moves in the area away from the U.S." He maintained, however, that "no dramatic results" were expected from the trip.

"Watching Outcome of Brazil Talks"

Business-oriented Nihon Keizai ran a Sao Paulo correspondent's assertion that the Secretary "is expected to carry out 'dialogue diplomacy' in order to rebuild U.S. relations with Latin American countries amid reports of discord between the two sides."

He added, "Latin American diplomatic circles are focusing attention on the outcome of Kissinger's political talks with Brazilian leaders because of the important position of the South American nation."

L A T I N A M E R I C A

V E N E Z U E L A

Heavy News Coverage

All major Venezuelan newspapers today gave heavy front-page coverage to Secretary Kissinger's arrival in Caracas.

There was no editorial comment except in the English-language Daily Journal, which headlined: "U. S. Has Made Important Progress in Understanding Latin America." The paper said: "We look to the U. S. for moral leadership and above all for the encouragement of freedom everywhere....Dr. Kissinger's recent speech before the U. N. is proof that Washington is turning our way. We hope that is why Dr. Kissinger has taken the time to come here."

B R A Z I L

"Motive: To Draw Closer to Latin America"

Independent conservative Jornal da Tarde of Sao Paulo yesterday carried this assessment by columnist Carlos Conde:

"The trip that Kissinger begins today in Latin America certainly represents a test of U. S. ability to lay out a series of new relationships in several parts of the world after the Angolan episode....The basic motive of Kissinger's visit is to draw closer to Latin America as a part of U. S. global strategy..."

Conde wrote in the sister paper, O Estado de Sao Paulo:

"Kissinger's crusade loses much of its credibility due to the prospect that he may not be kept in the State Department even if Ford is elected. The concern of diplomatic circles in Brasilia is to find out whether Kissinger has the necessary support in the U. S. to establish a comprehensive policy for Latin America..."

"Expect More Bilateral Agreements"

U. S. correspondent Jayme Dantas wrote on the same day in moderate Jornal do Brasil of Rio that "what is expected from Kissinger's trip is a change in U. S. -Latin American policy that would result in more bilateral agreements and discussions rather than decisions encompassing the area as a whole."

On Sunday, the paper predicted that Secretary Kissinger would discuss with President Geisel "bilateral political and economic relations--such as American protectionism versus shoes and other Brazilian products--and also worldwide policies such as U. S. and Brazilian positions in international forums..." The paper noted that "while the Foreign Office sees restrictions on shoes and leather bags as a dangerous precedent...the Americans maintain that Brazil sees only the negative side of the trade act and does not examine that part of the law which benefits developing countries" with "a generalized system of preferences that has the purpose of benefiting non-traditional industries of developing countries..."

"Brazil-U. S. Rapprochement?"

Dated February 18, the weekly news magazine Veja observed that "despite increasing differences...and bitter Brazilian complaints in the economic field both countries could inaugurate a period of rapprochement with or even without the signing of a political agreement in Brasilia this week."

PERU

Straight News, Two Statements

Almost all Lima newspapers, which are Government-controlled, gave heavy straight newsplay today to the Secretary's visit. Headlines and story leads stressed security measures.

La Cronica carried a statement from the Minister of Interior, who said: "Those people who are not in agreement with the visit of Mr. Kissinger should abstain from harmful attitudes that might present a distorted image of Peru."

An EFE Madrid news story in the paper, datelined Caracas, was headlined: "Kissinger Will Not Perform Miracles."

Correo ran an advertisement paid by the Federation of Peruvian Students repudiating the "presence in our oppressed country of the American imperialist Henry Kissinger for the purpose of collaborating with the ruling classes of Latin America in carrying out his neo-colonialist policy."

COLOMBIA

Moderate News Play

Papers today gave moderate play to the Kissinger visit.

Liberal El Tiempo of Bogota described his arrival in Caracas as taking place "in an atmosphere of complete calm..."

Liberal El Expectador of Bogota headlined: "Students Demonstrate!"

"Wants to Improve Relations"

Liberal Diario del Caribe of Barranquilla said today:

"Kissinger's visit can only mean that the U. S. seriously wants to improve relations with this part of the world....Kissinger comes with specific formulas to increase foreign trade."

Liberal El Pueblo of Cali noted: "Since the apparent failure of the Alliance for Progress the U. S. has limited its cooperation with this part of the world. Nevertheless, everything indicates that there could be a change of attitude in the near future."

ARGENTINA

"Cold Reception in Caracas"

Moderate play was given the Latin American visit in today's Buenos Aires newspapers.

Financíal El Cronista Comercial headed its story: "Cold Reception for Kissinger." Its lead read: "A cold official reception, acid criticism from the press and politicians of all sectors and some skirmishes between university students and police marked...the arrival of Secretary Kissinger..."

Popular Ultima Hora headlined: "Kissinger Arrives in Caracas--Gets Bad Reception."

OTHER LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES

Media reaction in a number of other countries of the Hemisphere mainly consisted of news reporting of the Caracas visit based on wire-service dispatches.